

News Release



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HEARST CASTLE® TAKES A RENEWED APPROACH TO ENERGY EFFICIENCY

SAN SIMEON, Calif. – The Hearst Castle® and Visitor Center is undergoing a \$3.1 million renewable energy project that will reduce energy use by over 40 percent and show the world that even historic properties can adopt new practices.

Beginning this summer, the 17-acre property will use a variety of energy-efficient and renewable energy technologies to produce non-polluting electricity and to capture the power of our natural resources including the sun, wind, and water. "With the ability to generate our own electricity, we're taking the strain off the state's power grid and contributing to a cleaner environment, a vision that Hearst himself would be proud of," said Dan Eller, director of communications for Hearst Castle®. "This project continues with Mr. Hearst's vision of creating a property that preserves and utilizes the natural environment."

The Hearst Castle® Visitor Center will be equipped with energy management systems to efficiently control the building's electricity loads and improve power distribution. Solar photovoltaic (PV) panels will be installed on the 28,000 square foot rooftop, supplying almost 20 percent of the Center's electricity needs. Along the hillside, wind turbines, hydroelectric equipment and a 300-kilowatt (kW) fuel cell system will be installed to offset a significant portion of the Castle's 330-kW peak electric load.

To help educate tourists about the improved efficiency, an interactive renewable energy showcase will be constructed inside the Visitor Center, which receives over one million annual visitors. The displays will help explain the difference between the environmental impacts of energy from fossil fuels and the benefits of using natural resources.

Hearst Castle's® environmental stewardship began in the early 1920s, with the installation of a hydro (water) system to provide power for the guesthouse and Casa Grande. Hearst Castle®, now operated and maintained by California State Parks, continues to be a “green” leader by using natural gas powered tour buses, and energy-efficient lighting in the administrative offices and Visitor Center.

The renewable energy project is being implemented through a joint partnership with Friends of Hearst Castle, the California Energy Commission and California State Parks, and is supported through multi-year sponsorships and marketing partnerships with international corporations. Visit www.friendsofhearstcastle.org or call 805-923-2138 for more details about the project.

About Hearst Castle®

Built by William Randolph Hearst and architect Julia Morgan between 1919 and 1947, Hearst Castle® is one of the largest of approximately 5,000 historic house museums in the U.S. The entire estate encompasses 90,082 square feet including 165 rooms and 127 acres of gardens, terraces, pools and walkways.

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